

XLIX.—*Description of a new Siluroïd Fish from West Africa.* By G. A. BOULENGER, F.R.S.*Synodontis obesus.*

Præmaxillary teeth in several irregular series, forming a broad band; mandibular teeth 20 to 28, hooked, simple, measuring less than half diameter of eye. Depth of body 3 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  times in total length, length of head 4 times. Head not or but slightly longer than broad, convex on the occiput; snout obtusely conical, half as long as the head; eye supero-lateral, its diameter 5 times in length of head, a little more than twice in interorbital width; upper surface of head strongly granulate or vermiculate from between the eyes; frontal fontanelle narrow. Occipito-nuchal shield obtusely tectiform, longer than broad, granulate or vermiculate like the upper surface of the head, and terminating in two pointed or rounded processes. Gill-cleft not extending below base of pectoral. Maxillary barbel with a broad membranous fringe, longer than the head, not reaching much beyond middle of pectoral spine; mandibular barbels inserted on a straight transverse line, outer shorter than the head, more than twice as long as inner. Lips much developed. Humeral process granulate, acutely pointed, extending as far as occipito-nuchal shield. Dorsal II 6; spine strong, as long as the head, striated, with one or two very feeble serræ in front near its extremity, and about 10 feeble serræ behind in its upper half. Adipose fin 4 times as long as deep, as long as or a little shorter than the head,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  as long as its distance from the dorsal. Anal IV 7–8. Pectoral spine nearly as long as dorsal, striated, feebly serrated on the outer edge, with 14 to 16 strong serræ on the inner edge. Ventral reaching or nearly reaching anal. Caudal deeply bifurcate. Skin of body smooth. Brown above and beneath, spotted and dotted with darker.

Total length 220 millim.

This species is founded on three specimens, two from the Gaboon, and a larger one which, collected by Miss Kingsley in the Opobo River, Old Calabar, has been referred by Günther to *S. serratus*, Rüpp. (Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (6) xvii. 1896, p. 277). *S. serratus* differs in the more numerous mandibular teeth, the more elongate body, the stronger anterior serrature of the dorsal and pectoral spines, the longer occipito-nuchal shield, the longer adipose fin, and the absence of spots. *S. obesus* stands much nearer to *S. gambiensis*, Gthr., which differs in the thicker barbels, the maxillaries lacking every trace of a fringe.